

WHITEHALL PARKS AND RECREATION

June 22, 2017

The meeting of the Whitehall Parks and Recreation Commission was called to order at 6:00 pm by Chairman John Feters. In attendance: Chris Bolich, Tiffanie Charles, Feters, Katie Quincel, Kyra Thorpe, Zach Wright, Director Shannon Sorrell, and Shannon Werner. Guests: Mayor Kim Maggard, Economic Development and Service Director Zach Woodruff, WCS Athletic Director Bill Hughett, Brian Kridler and Rich Zingale of the YMCA, Franco Manno of EMH&T, and Cara Hill of KEMBA Financial Credit Union. Absent: Mike Adkins.

Charles moved, seconded by Quincel, to excuse Akins and the motion carried 6 – 0.

Feters then polled guests for questions and comments. Cara Hill of KEMBA Financial Credit Union introduced herself. She thanked the Commission for their time and opportunity to sponsor the community block parties and expressed the desire to continue building a positive partnership.

Next, Bill Hughett, WCS Athletic Director, addressed the Commission to request the use of John Bishop Park to serve as practice space for the High School soccer teams. Hughett explained the present challenges the district was facing accommodating the practice needs for all fall sports and activities. They would like to put two goals at the south end of John Bishop Park (between Langley Ave. and shelter #3) for the season.

Wright asked if the schools removed the youth T-Ball diamonds, could they use that space adjacent to Lamby Lane Park. Hughett said, even if the diamonds were removed, the space was not large enough.

Wright also asked what challenges practicing off-site could pose. Hughett said the students could run to the park as part of their work-out, and that the trainer would be available with the use of a gator.

Feters suggested the Commission should vote on the matter at the next meeting.

Sorrell thanked Hughett for his time. Hughett said he looks forward to continuing the strong partnership between the school district and the City.

Next Charles moved, seconded by Bolich, to waive the field rental fee for the High School softball team to hold their annual fundraiser tournament (on September 23 and 24, 2017) and the motion carried 6–0.

Sorrell mediated introductions between the staff and the Commission. The Commissioners introduced themselves. Staff members introduced themselves and stated their role in the department.

Sorrell then presented a request from Councilman Lee Stahley to rent Lamby Lane Park for a re-election campaign event. Lamby Lane Park and its facilities have always been “first come, first served” and therefore there is no policy or fee structure regarding the rental of the park and/ or shelter house. As

such, the Commission agreed that Stahley could use the park under the same “first come, first served” policy as all citizens. Sorrell said she would let him know and report back with any questions.

Next, Brian Kridler and Rich Zingale of the YMCA presented a power point presentation regarding the partnership between the City and the Y and the renovation of the Activity Center. This conceptual design was conceived by the design firm Grō and followed the model of people→programs→design. In addition to remodeling the existing building, the plan calls for building a new airnasium (turf house) to the south.

The Y is currently going through the exercise of a program pro forma (to determine operational costs). This, along with cost estimation and community feedback, is the next step in the process.

Then Woodruff spoke about the significant (unplanned) changes that Whitehall Community Park has seen since the 2014 Parks Master Plan was completed. To address this, the City has approved a purchase order to engage EMH&T to update the Master Plan for WCP. Franco Manno will again be the lead on this project. Manno asked if anyone had any immediate feedback that they wanted to share. He said he would continue to engage the Commission in work session(s) as the process moves forward.

Quincel moved, seconded by Wright, to approve the May 25, 2017 meeting minutes and the motion carried 6 – 0.

The Commission reviewed the following items: employees’ wages/ personal service for 5/12/17 through 6/8/17; bills and refunds through 5/31/17; and the Trust Fund, budget, and income through 5/31/17.

Director’s Report:

Sorrell said that the new construction portion of the Armory project will begin on Tuesday. She urged Commissioners to share the Music in the Park/ Family Fun Day Event on Facebook. The department will partner with the YMCA to offer a soccer clinic at the end of July.

Sorrell said the Splashpad features should be ready to run/ be shown next week. Camera installation and final inspections are scheduled for the end of the following week too. We are looking into purchasing a vending machine for the Splashpad.

The City has scheduled a grand opening / “ribbon cutting” of the Splashpad on July 5th at 5:30 pm. Sorrell expects the Mayor to make this announcement at the Fireworks viewing party on July 3rd.

Lastly, Sorrell informed the Commission that she (and several other Commissioners) attended the WYAA board meeting the previous evening. This meeting was to discuss potential disciplinary action stemming from an on-site altercation between league officials and a parent last week. At the time of the incident, the parent was suspended for the season then, several days later, the two board members/coaches (one of whom appeared to have assaulted the parent) were suspended for one game.

Sorrell said that when she was asked what the City would like to see done, she said the City and department recommends that best practices dictate all parties involved should be suspended from

league activities for the season. However, the board went into executive session and voted to take no further action. Sorrell thinks the City needs to continue to evaluate its role in youth sports.

Bill Hughett offered his outside perspective that it appears that the Commission is allowing five separate youth organizations to operate and do not have control over any of them. He would recommend that the Commission begin to develop a plan for the Parks and Recreation department to run youth sports in Whitehall. In the meantime, the school district will continue to do what they think best serves the needs of its kids.

There being no further business, Charles moved, seconded by Quincel, and the meeting adjourned at 8:15 pm.

To the best of my knowledge these minutes are true and correct.

Chairperson